



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01

AID-20 OPR-02 NIC-01 EUR-25 SAM-01 /142 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6247

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CONFIDENTIAL ISLAMABAD 7763

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF

SUBJ: PAKISTANI HELICOPTER FORCED TO LAND IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 5023

1. PAKISTAN TIMES AUGUST 12 CARRIED STORY OF FORCED LANDING OF PAKISTAN ARMY HELICOPTER ON AFGHAN TERRITORY CLOSE TO BORDER. NO SPECIFIC LOCALE GIVEN. GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED TIMES CITED OFFICIAL STATEMENT FROM RAWALPINDI THAT AIRCRAFT WITH FIVE PERSONS ABOARD ENROUTE FROM GILGIT TO CHITRAL WHEN LOST ITS WAY DUE TO RADIO MALFUNCTION AND MISTAKENLY FORCE-LANDED IN AFGHANISTAN. BECAUSE HELICOPTER RAN OUT OF FUEL, ARTICLE SAID, IT COULD NOT RETURN TO PAKISTAN TERRITORY. STATEMENT SAID HELICOPTER, BEING USED BY FRONTIER WORKS ORGANIZATION (FWO), WAS ON ROUTINE FLIGHT. (FWO, WHICH HAS PRIMARILY ROAD AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION DUTIES IN NWFP, IS FINANCED BY GHQ, PAK ARMY AND STAFFED BY BOTH SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS.)

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY

L. Kelley

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2. STATEMENT SAID IT IS BELIEVED THAT AIRCRAFT, CREW AND PASSENGERS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO KABUL BY AFGHAN AUTHORITIES. GOP, IT SAID, IS APPROACHING AFGHAN GOVERNMENT FOR "IMMEDIATE" RETURN OF HELICOPTER, CREW AND PASSENGERS..

3. EMBASSY UNABLE OBTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT INCIDENT FROM PAK MILITARY. EMBOFF HAS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR TOMORROW WITH MFA DIRGEN FOR AFGHANISTAN AND WE WILL SEND IN ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION WE OBTAIN.

4. US ARMA COL. GILLILLAND DISCUSSED MATTER AUGUST 11 WITH AFGHAN MIL ATTACHE BRIG. SALEH WHO SAID HELICOPTER WAS ALOUETTE III CARRYING FIVE PERSONS, ALL OF WHOM WERE MILITARY. SALEH DENIED THAT AFGHANS HAD FORCED AIRCRAFT DOWN, SAID IT WAS ON GROUND WHEN THEY DISCOVERED IT. ARMA CONSIDERS IT LIKELY THAT HELICOPTER BELONGS TO PAK ARMY AS THEY HAVE SEVERAL ALOUETTES AND AS THEY FREQUENTLY OPERATE IN AREA. HE BELIEVES GOP VERSION OF INCIDENT LIKELY AS IT EASY FOR AIRCRAFT TO GET LOST IN RUGGED MOUNTAINOUS BORDER AREA. HE THINKS HIGHLY UNLIKELY PAKS WOULD HAVE BEEN USING HELICOPTER FOR SURVEILLANCE OVER AFGHAN TERRITORY.

5. STORY GIVEN MINIMAL FRONTPAGE COVERAGE BY TIMES BUT BANNER HEADLINED BY VERNACULAR PRESS WHICH CARRIED SAME GOVERNMENT PRESS SERVICE (APP) STORY.

6. FOR NEW DELHI: ALL INDIA RADIO URDU LANGUAGE BROADCAST RECEIVED HERE CALLED INCIDENT "VERY SERIOUS." BYROADE

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